

**Urbanization Characteristics and their Relation with  
Urban Expansion and Economic Growth  
An Analytical Study of Nablus City**

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**Abstract**

Through history the city of Nablus was well known of the prosperity of its industry and commercial growth with other cities. It was considered one of the main commercial and industrial cities in Palestine. During the last thirty years it witnessed a significant urban and economic growth, by which it became the first economic city in Palestine. However, the recent instable political conditions and the actions taken by the Israeli occupation since 2001 have seriously affected the urban expansion in the city and resulted in the huge degradation of its economy. Therefore, this thesis has aimed basically at the study and analysis of the urbanization characteristics and their relation with the process of urban expansion and economic growth in the city.

To achieve the aims of this study, several scientific approaches were used among which the analytical approach was the most important. A questionnaire has been designed, a sample was determined, and three different areas in the city (Rafidia, old town, and al-Jabal al-Shamali) was selected. The sample included 450 individuals who were chosen by the random stratified method from the three areas. Then, the questionnaire was collected, coded, and then entered to the computer and statistically manipulated through the Statistical Analysis Program (SPSS).

The study constituted the analysis and evaluation of the most related sides that played a significant role in the urbanization process. The economic characteristics of the study area were evaluated due to their impact on the urban expansion and economic growth of the city. In addition, the educational, demographic and environmental aspects were evaluated. This evaluation has indicated the availability of urban characteristics in the area as well as the interrelationship between the urban expansion and economic growth.

The study reached a number of results and recommendations. It indicated the existence of differentiation in certain proportions among the three selected areas in the city in terms of urbanization, urban expansion and economic growth. Also, it illustrated the existence of obvious differences in terms of monthly income of household's head and residence, household's income and residence area, and in terms of levels of education. Finally, the study emphasized the need of upgrading of living conditions in poor areas, support and encouragement of education to all individuals as well as providing support and help for the residents in poor areas like the old town.